WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

High rate of freight charges for fruits/vegetables for Gulf Countries by Air India

*24. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India charges Rs. 16 per Kg, for transporting fruits and vegetables to Gulf countries whereas Pakistan International Airways charges only half the rates for the same purpose; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to reduce the rates?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIA-TlOr. (SHRI MOT1 LAL VQRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Railway accident near Shambhu in Punjab

*26. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a railway accident took place near Shambhu in Pun jab on December 16, 1987 resulting in the death of 10 persons and in juries to many;

(b) whether the causes of that accident were investigated, if so, the results thereof; and

(c) what are the details of the compensation and relief provided to the next of kin of the deceased and to the persons injured, in the acci dent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the provisional findings of the Commissioner of Railway Safety Northern Circle, working under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the accident occurred due to improper taking off of the Down despatch signal of the station

(c) Ex-gratia relief at the rate of Rs. 5,000/- each to the next of kin of the identified dead. Rs. 2,000 each to the grievously injured and Rs. 2501- each to those with simple injuries was given Compensation will be awarded by the *Ad-hoc* Claims Commissioner being appointed for the purpose

Import of Helicopters from France

*27. SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT:

SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that six helicopters were imported from France some weeks ago if so, for what purpose; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that M/s. Pawan Hans Corporation have been asked to take them over; and-if so, for what reasons?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF CTVIL AVIATION (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) Six SA365N Dauphin 2 helicopters in the-executive configuration have been imported for meeting the VIP transportation requirements.

(b) The contract for the purchase of 27 SA365N Dauphin 2 helicopters, including six in the VIP standard of

preparation was signed by M/s. Pawan Hans Ltd. with M/s. Aerospatiale of France. These helicopters are, therefore, being received by M[s. Pawan Hans Ltd.

Cancellation of Inter City train, between Rajkot and Ahmedabad

•28. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEH TA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Inter C|ty train between Rajkot and Ahmedabad have been suspended cancelled without notice; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there was a public demand to extend this train upto Baroda and assurances were given by Government to do so;

(c) whether this cancellation has evoked public protests and whether in view thereof it is proposed to restore the service; if so; from when;

(d) what were the occupancy figures in respect of this train for the preceeding six months; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that the 'season ticket' holders are harassed and are not even getting refund of unutilised period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (c) The train was temporarily cancelled from 5.2.88 and has 'been restored from 15.2.88. Notice of cancellation was given through station notice board, and through announcements on public address system.

(b) The Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committee of Rajkot Division had discussed this proposal, but did not recommend it.

(d) Occupancy census is taken once in six months. As per October, 1987 census the number of passengers and percentage occupation figures were as under:

Section	No. of passengers I II		Occupation I	*la* H
153 *Ahmedabad-Rajkot Express*				
Ahmedabad-Viramgam	17	511	47	72
Viramgam-Surendranagar	16	499	44	70
Surenc'ranagar-Wankaner	12	435	33	61
Wankaner-Rajkot	15	236	42	33
1*54 Rajhot-Ahmadabad Express :*				
Rajkot-Wankaner	13	420	36	53
Wankaner-Surendranagar	8	291 8	22	41
Surendranagar-Viramgam	401		22	56
Viramgam- Ahmedabad	16	606	44	85